Education Policy Analysis and Leadership M.Ed. Emphasis Program

Analytical Report (Capstone Policy Report)

The UCR Master of Education emphasis in Education Policy Analysis and Leadership program is designed to afford students partnership and service-learning opportunities with education and community leaders. Students will complete a culminating analytical report. The report will either be organized as a literature review or as a policy analysis. The project is expected to take at least two regular academic terms to complete and may well include one or more of the following: research, service learning, and program internship opportunities tied to the topic of study.

The goal of the project is to enable the student to explore work in an area in significant depth and to help prepare that student up for the work they wish to do upon graduation from the program. The student may complete an internship or service-learning opportunity that enables an applied education research experience that 1) puts their learning and expertise to use in the community 2) enables on-site community experiences and professional connections to inform their learning and advance career opportunities, 3) provides an opportunity for students to use their learning and skills to address a relevant policy challenge or issue that may be particularly useful to the community/education entity.

The Policy Report is a graduation requirement for students in M.Ed. emphasis of Education Policy Analysis and Leadership. The analytical report is an opportunity for students to take what they have learned throughout their graduate studies and in collaboration with schools, campuses and/or education-based community organizations and examine a particular policy topic of interest to them and/or the community/education entity. The report is typically completed in the last term of the program under the direction of a faculty member.

For the Policy Report, students should examine an educational problem or issue and recommend actions or solutions. The final report should be 25-30 pages (not including references, tables, figures, or appendices), formatted in Microsoft Word using size 12 Times New Roman font, double-spaced, typewritten, and following the most recent American Psychological Association guidelines for paper style. Students are required to include a minimum of 20 scholarly sources. NO Wikipedia sources are allowed. Information about APA style is available at
https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

Option I: Literature Review on a Policy or Leadership Topic
This option provides students with an opportunity to examine an educational problem or issue and recommend actions or solutions through a literature review.

Content
I.   Abstract
II.   Introduction
III. Method
IV.   Synthesis of Literature
V.   Recommendations
VI.   Conclusion

I. **Abstract**
      a. Abstract is a well-developed paragraph (no more than 250 words, single-spaced) that should be understandable to a wide audience.
      b. Briefly summarize your paper and your whole project.
      c. Highlight major points of your investigation, explain why your work is important, and how you went about doing it.
      d. Describe what you learned, and what you concluded.

II. **Introduction**
      a. Introduction should place the paper within the context of the ongoing research about your topic
      b. Identify the problem addressed in the paper
      c. Describe the significance of the problem or issue
          • Include an explanation of why you selected this issue; how widespread you believe this problem to be and what leads you to this conclusion; and, how/why the issue made its way to the policy agenda
      d. State the purpose of the paper and what you plan to accomplish in the upcoming sections. This should be made clear and explicit.

III. **Method**
      a. Describe your service-learning experience, where it took place, and with whom you participated
      b. State purpose of the systematic review of literature
      c. State search procedures for literature review (e.g., electronic databases, individual journals, organizational websites)
      d. Selection criteria for literature

IV. **Literature Review**
      a. Include an introductory paragraph that previews the upcoming sections
      [Include headings/subheadings to organize your literature review]
      b. Analyze and interpret the bodies of related literature and theoretical perspectives for the identified problem. Organize the studies/literature by targeted population, theme, and/or topic.
      c. Describe some of the principal social, political, and economic conditions that have contributed to shaping your policy problem.
      d. Describe how your service-learning experience supports, extends, or contradicts research and/or theories about the underpinnings of the problem
          [Provide specific examples both from your service placement and from the literature]
      e. Demonstrate a scholarly understanding of the peer-review literature associated with your topic
          [Cite original sources]

**V.	Recommendations**
    a.	How does your service-learning experience inform solutions to the problem?
        •	Identify some interventions you observed that are designed to help eliminate the problem
    b.	Provide bold and sensible recommendations that are supported by the related literature
        •	What are the tradeoffs implicit in each? Who/what groups are likely to support/oppose each solution?
    c.	What potential policy consequences do you foresee from this solution?
    d.	Be clear regarding the intended audience for your recommendations. What entities have the ability to address the issue or problem?

**VI.	Conclusion**
    a.	Include a paragraph summarizing the main ideas in the supporting paragraphs—and leave the reader with something fresh and new to consider about the topic.

Option II: Policy Analysis

The policy analysis option provides students with the opportunity to identify and engage with an applied policy issue or challenge by providing an in-depth case analysis of the policy issue, its use, application, and effectiveness, and explores a series of recommendations.

Content

**I.	Introduction**
    a.	Introduction should place the paper within the context of the ongoing research about your topic
    b.	Identify the problem addressed in the paper
    c.	Describe the significance of the problem
        i.	Include an explanation of why you selected this issue; how widespread you believe this problem to be and what leads you to this conclusion; and, how/why the issue made its way to the policy agenda
    d.	State the purpose of the paper and what you plan to accomplish in the upcoming sections. This should be made clear and explicit.

**II.	Context**
    a.	Describe your service-learning site, mission of organization, community context, where it took place,
        Describe your role and with whom you participated
    b.	Describe one or two key policy issues/challenges the organization is attempting to

address and provide data or frameworks that the organization is using to address this challenge

    c. Literature/Policy Context

State purpose of the systematic review of literature/policy context (reports, briefs, etc.)

State search procedures for literature review (e.g., electronic databases, individual journals, organizational websites)

Selection criteria for literature

III.   Brief Literature/Policy Overview Review

a. Include introductory paragraph that previews the upcoming sections
[Include headings/subheadings to organize your literature review]

b. Analyze and interpret the bodies of related literature, theoretical and policy perspectives for the identified problem.
[Organize studies/literature by targeted population, theme, and/or topic]

c. Describe some of the principle social, political, and economic conditions that have contributed to shaping your policy problem.

d. Describe how your service-learning experience supports, extends, or contradicts research and/or theories about the underpinnings of the problem
[Provide specific examples both from your service placement and from the literature]

e. Demonstrate a scholarly understanding of the peer-review literature associated with your topic
[Cite original sources]

IV.   Recommendations

a. How does your service-learning experience inform solutions to the problem?
    i. Identify some interventions you observed that are designed to help eliminate the problem

b. Provide bold and sensible recommendations that are supported by the related literature
    i. What are the tradeoffs implicit in each? Who/what groups are likely to support/oppose each solution?
    ii. Which groups have been excluded from policy discussions, creation, and implementation?

c. What potential policy consequences do you foresee from this solution?

V.   Conclusion

a. Include a paragraph summarizing the main ideas in the supporting paragraphs—and leave the reader with something fresh and new to consider about the topic.

General Writing
- Paper should follow most recent APA edition guidelines
- Title should capture the topic and goals of the paper
- Reference list should include all cited sources in the paper
- Include page numbers